Unesco urges seat at table for youth in education policy

• Notes only one-third countries have formal youth bodies on education • President, PM stress need for skill-acquisition to secure Pakistan's future

By Amin Ahmed

ISLAMABAD: Young people are under-represented in positions of power and often excluded from policy decisions that disproportionately affect them, such as on public debt, climate change and, most directly, education, said a new Unesco report released on Friday on the eve of International Day of Education.

Unesco's Global Education Monitoring Report 2026, titled "Lead with youth", said that while young people and students are not well represented in formal politics, they remain politically active and frequently demand good governance and social justice.

"They want their voices to be heard and to be engaged meaningfully on issues that affect their present and future, notably on education," it said.

It added that youth and students' calls for meaningful engagement in education decision-making are part of a broader global movement for youth agency that has grown over the past three decades.

The report said stronger youth and student engagement requires formal mechanisms and a seat at decision-making tables, representative and inclusive participation, institutional support and resources, and the willingness of authorities to value and act on feedback.

According to the report, only one in three countries has formal bodies to engage youth or students in education discussions.

However, the report found that satisfaction with engagement is lowest among school student groups. Asked to assess the depth of their participation, ranging from exclusion to being treated as valued partners, only 20 per cent said they felt they were genuinely collaborating with government or that their contributions mattered. Satisfaction rises when students are given formal roles and responsibilities in policy reform, it added.

Meanwhile, in a message issued on the occasion, President Asif Ali Zardari said Pakistan's future was closely linked to its youth.

"As a nation with a rich cultural heritage and a large young population, we must ensure that education nurtures curiosity, competence and character. It should enable young people to think critically, act ethically and contribute positively to their communities," he said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the government was paying special attention to promoting higher education and skills through various programmes to strengthen the education system and empower youth.

In a message on International Day of Education, he said Pakistan joined the international community in recognising those associated with education and training, including students, teachers, parents, educators and researchers.

To mark the day, Unesco and the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training held an event at Islamabad Model College for Girls under the global theme, 'The Power of Youth in Co-creating Education', with organisers saying the forum aimed to bring students into education policy discussions.

Minister of State for Education and Professional Training Wajiha Qamar described education as a national priority, calling it "the most powerful investment a country can make".

Unesco's representative in Pakistan, Fuad Pashayev, said the education emergency could not be addressed through policy alone and stressed that young people were "not just the future" but also the present.

Separately, the World Bank said its group was the largest financier of education in the developing world, with a $26.4 billion portfolio across 81 countries, supporting 324 million students to date through education-related programmes.

Defence of Human Rights
Defence of Human Rights condemns the illegal arrest of Pakistani human rights activist and lawyer Imaan Mazari and Hadi Ali Chatta

MEMBERS of civil society protest against the arrest of Imaan Mazari-Hazir and her husband, Advocate Hadi Ali Chattha, outside the National Press Club.—Tanveer Shehzad

Imaan, Hadi remanded to jail after dramatic arrest

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complete strike in condemnation.

According to bar officials, Ms Mazari and Mr Chattha, along with IHCBA President Syed Wajid Ali Gilani, Secretary Manzoor Ahmed Jajja and other lawyers, went to surrender before IHC Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar. They were informed by court staff that the chief justice was not present, after which they returned to the bar office and later left for the district courts in a vehicle of the Islamabad Bar Association.

Bar leaders said police vehicles that had been deployed outside the IHC building for the past three days followed the convoy. Near the underpass in front of the Serena Hotel, police intercepted the vehicle, arrested Ms Mazari and Mr Chattha, and shifted them to an undisclosed location. Additional police contingents were deployed around the IHC, while strict checking was enforced.

Outside the Women Police Station, Mr Gilani said a fresh FIR had been registered three days earlier against the couple. He said the IHC had granted relief in one case, while other matters were pending before Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka, where the accused were required to appear.

Bar representatives alleged that despite assurances that the couple would not be arrested, police intercepted them and used force. They claimed police personnel assaulted lawyers, forcibly opened vehicle doors and manhandled Ms Mazari during the arrest.

The bar associations expressed concern over her safety and alleged misconduct by law enforcement.

The Islamabad Bar Council, IHCBA and District Bar Association jointly condemned the arrests, calling them an attack on the legal fraternity and the rule of law. Bar leaders warned that if such actions continued, a movement similar to the 2007 lawyers' movement could be launched.

Meanwhile, IHCBA Secretary Manzoor Ahmed Jajja resigned, saying he had been assured the couple would not be arrested before surrendering to the trial court. Talking to *Dawn*, Mr Jajja said he had submitted his resignation to the Islamabad Bar Council.

He said that the quarters concerned assured them of giving the couple safe passage to face the trial and that he conveyed the same assurance to Ms Mazari and her husband. "After their arrest, I decided to resign," he said.

In a separate proceeding, Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Afzal Majoka adjourned the hearing of a case relating to an allegedly controversial tweet against Ms Mazari and Mr Chattha due to their absence.

The court observed that their right to cross-examine could be closed if they failed to appear. Prosecutor Rana Usman told the court the accused were deliberately avoiding proceedings. Judge Majoka directed that cross-examination be completed by 3:30pm on Saturday (today), noting that sufficient time had already been granted.

CM Bugti terms mineral resources collective property

By Saleem Shahid

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has said the province's mineral resources are the collective property of its people and that no form of illegal activity in the sector will be tolerated.

CM Bugti said illegal mining was not only causing serious losses to the national and provincial exchequers, but also posing a grave challenge to the rule of law. The province was facing losses of billions of rupees every year due to the illegal practice, he pointed out.

He said that 47 illegal chromite mines were sealed during a joint operation by the district administration and law enforcement agencies in Pishin district. The action, he said, was practical evidence of the Balochistan government's firm resolve to protect mineral resources and uphold the supremacy of law.

He said such unlawful activities had deprived the province of its true revenue potential and denied the people their legitimate rights. He announced that the provincial government was introducing a comprehensive and effective policy to completely eliminate illegal mining and reform the minerals sector.

Ehsan Shah quits BNP-M, revives his own party

By Behram Baloch

GWADAR: Former Balochistan finance minister Syed Ehsan Shah on Friday announced that he had resigned from the Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) and revived his own party, the Pakistan National Party (Awami), which he had merged with BNP-M a few years ago.

Addressing a press conference at his office in Turbat, Mr Shah said he had remained associated with BNP-M for three years but found it increasingly difficult to align with the party's "rigid political approach" under Sardar Akhtar Mengal.

He said the decision to merge the Pakistan National Party (Awami) with BNP-M had been withdrawn and that the party's revival would restore his earlier political position.

"I had merged my Pakistan National Party (Awami) in the larger interest of Balochistan and its people," he said, adding that he held no personal grievance against Mr Mengal.

World spends $30 destroying nature for every $1 spent protecting it

• UNEP report says total nature-negative finance flows reached $7.3tr in 2023 • Private sources accounted for $4.9tr

By Our Reporter

ISLAMABAD: For every $1 the world invests in protecting nature, it spends $30 on destroying it. This stark imbalance is the central finding of a new report released by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The 'State of Finance for Nature 2026' report finds that total nature-negative finance flows stand at $7.3 trillion. Of this, $4.9tr comes from private sources, highly concentrated in a few sectors including utilities, industrials, energy, and basic materials. Public environmentally harmful subsidies — mainly for fossil fuels, agriculture, water, transport and construction — amounted to $2.4tr in 2023.

Released on Thursday, the report called for a major shift in global financing towards nature-based solutions (NbS) and the phasing out of harmful investments to deliver high returns, reduce risk exposure, and enhance resilience.

The report further finds that finance flows for NbS totalled $220 billion, with nearly 90 per cent coming from public sources, reflecting a steady rise in domestic and international support.

Globally, finance flows remain heavily skewed towards nature-negative activities, threatening ecosystems, economies and human well-being. Nearly half of the global economy significantly depends on nature, yet governments, businesses and financial institutions continue to erode the world's collective natural capital.

In 2023, finance directly harmful to nature reached $7.3tr, while investments in NbS amounted to only $220bn. To meet global commitments under the Rio Conventions, NbS investment must increase by more than two and a half times to $571bn by 2030, while harmful finance flows must be phased out and repurposed, emphasised the report.

While finance for NbS has continued to grow, it remains far below the level required to meet global biodiversity, climate and land restoration goals.

Five killed in D.I. Khan suicide blast

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Pakhtunkhwa Rescue 1122 spokesperson Bilal Ahmed Faizi said five bodies and 10 injured had been taken to the hospital.

He elaborated that seven ambulances, a fire vehicle and a disaster vehicle reached the site of the incident soon after it was reported. Rescue officials said some of the injured were in a serious condition. Authorities cordoned off the area and launched an investigation into the incident.

Condemnations

KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi strongly condemned the blast and sought a report from the provincial police chief.

According to a statement, he also directed law enforcement agencies to investigate the incident and identify those responsible.

He said the responsible parties would be brought to justice. "The provincial government shares the grief of the martyrs' families. All possible assistance will be provided," he said. Meanwhile, KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi sought a report into the incident, according to a statement from his office. "All possible medical assistance should be provided to the injured in the Dera blast," he was quoted as saying, expressing grief over the incident.—Muhammad Irfan Mughal/Manzoor Ali

Car-dumper collision kills eight

By Mohammad Hussain Khan

HYDERABAD: Eight people, including two children and a woman, were killed when their car collided with a dumper near Kotri late on Friday night, officials said.

Jamshoro Deputy Commissioner Ghazanfar Qadri confirmed the incident and said the bodies and wounded persons were shifted to Liaquat University Hospital.

The SITE police said the victims were heading towards Thatta when they met with a fatal accident.

Nine dead as snow blankets northern parts

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afternoon. Lower Chitral Deputy Commissioner Hashim Azim said the bodies were recovered from the debris, while a nine-year-old boy survived and was rushed to hospital.

Officials said the avalanche was triggered after the area received over 20 inches of snowfall, with a huge mass of snow sliding down from a nearby pasture and hitting the isolated house in the sparsely populated mountainous village.

The deceased were identified as Bacha Khan, his wife, three sons, two daughters and two daughters-in-law. They were reportedly dining in the central room of the house when the avalanche struck.

Snowfall continued uninterrupted for more than 36 hours across the Chitral valley, from Arandu to Broghil, severely disrupting daily life. Vehicular traffic was suspended on several roads, including the approach road to the Lowari Tunnel, where thousands of passengers remained stranded for around 18 hours before traffic was restored on Friday evening after snow clearance.

Several roads in Upper and Lower Chitral remain closed due to heavy snowfall. Electricity supply was also disrupted after snowfall at Lowari Top severed the national transmission line connecting Chitral.

Large parts of KP received heavy rain and snowfall during the ongoing weather spell, resulting in road blockages, suspension of power supply and extreme cold. The mountains surrounding the Peshawar valley also received heavy snowfall, triggering a cold wave accompanied by chilly winds.

In Khyber district, a large number of displaced families returning from Tirah were stranded amid a snowstorm. Rescue 1122 said an operation was underway in Tirah Valley, Painda Cheena, Dawatoi and Bagh Maidan.

Gilgit-Baltistan

Meanwhile, fresh snowfall across GB on Friday further worsened conditions, triggering road blockages, power outages and extreme cold across the region.

In Chipurson valley of Gojal, upper Hunza, the situation of earthquake-affected families living in tents deteriorated as snowfall hampered relief activities.

Local residents said hundreds of families were facing severe shortages of food, medicine and heating facilities, with temperatures dropping to below minus 20 degrees Celsius.

Police said five to six inches of snow was recorded in upper areas of Skardu, Astore, Ghanche, Shigar, Ghizer, Kharmang, Diamer, Hunza and Nagar. Major roads, including the Karakoram Highway (KKH), Baltistan Highway and Ghizer-Shandur Road, were blocked at multiple locations due to heavy snowfall, avalanches and landslides.

As a result, hundreds of passengers, including women, children and elderly people, were stranded for hours in various areas, particularly in Kohistan, where vehicles were stuck in extreme cold with limited access to food and shelter.

Later, the Kohistan administration cleared parts of the KKH and arranged food and temporary accommodation for stranded passengers.

Authorities said heavy snowfall cut off several communities from road access, while prolonged power outages of over 20 hours were reported in upper areas, forcing residents to struggle for firewood and heating.

Murree records 15 inches of snowfall

Heavy rain accompanied by a hailstorm lashed the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad on Friday, while 15 inches of snowfall was recorded in Murree. Heavy snowfall in Murree intensified the cold, with the temperature dropping to four degrees Celsius. The Met Office said temperatures were likely to fall further in the coming days. Owing to the snowfall, the Murree Expressway was closed.

Around 15 inches of snowfall was recorded in Murree, prompting the district administration to stop the entry of vehicles into the hill station.

Balochistan

Biting cold continued to grip Quetta and several other districts of Balochistan, severely disrupting daily life. Residents of Quetta experienced the coldest night of the current winter season on Thursday as the mercury plunged to minus 13 degrees Celsius, while the absence of gas supply left households struggling to keep warm amid icy Siberian winds that blew throughout the night.

Temperatures dropped sharply, with Kalat recording minus 12 degrees Celsius and Ziarat minus 11 degrees, paralysing routine life in Quetta, Kalat, Ziarat and surrounding areas.

Normal life was severely affected, with people seen searching for gas cylinders to heat their homes as gas pressure remained extremely low.

Water supply through Wasa tube wells was suspended after pipelines burst due to sub-zero temperatures and power outages in various parts of the provincial capital and its surrounding areas.

Roads and streets in Quetta wore a deserted look as most shops in commercial areas remained closed. Traffic remained thin, with most vehicles off the roads.

Meanwhile, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority carried out a timely rescue operation near Muslim Bagh, safely evacuating 17 stranded people, including 14 women and children, who were trapped on a road due to severe weather conditions.

In the Zhob area, army troops assisted the local administration in rescuing people stranded on the N-50 after snow froze on the highway.

Forecast

The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has predicted more rain and snowfall in various parts of the country from Sunday night to Tuesday, with daytime temperatures likely to drop during the period.

According to the Met Office, a westerly wave is likely to approach western parts of the country on Jan 25 (Sunday) and is expected to grip the upper parts on Jan 26.

Under the influence of this weather system, rain, wind and thunderstorms with snowfall are expected in most parts of Balochistan on Jan 25 (night) and Jan 26. Upper Sindh, including Sukkur, Larkana, Jacobabad and Dadu, is likely to receive rain on Jan 26.

Rain, wind and thunderstorms with snowfall, including heavy snowfall at a few places, are also expected in GB and Kashmir. The weather system is also expected to affect several parts of KP and Punjab.

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SR #	TENDER NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	CLOSING DATE & TIME
1.	OGDCL-SCM-SERVICES-CB-CSR-310112164-2026	HIRING OF COASTER FOR PICK and DROP FOR STUDENTS AT FILMKASSAR, DISTRICT CHAKWAL	10.02.2026 1030 Hrs
2.	OGDCL-SCM-LD-PT-PNP-QP-309828250-2026	SUPPLY OF GASKETS	10.02.2026 1130 Hrs
3.	OGDCL-SCM-LD-PT-PNP-QP-310132875-2026	MATERIAL FOR INSTALLATION & COMMISSIONING OF GENSET	11.02.2026 1130 Hrs
4.	OGDCL-SCM-LF-PT-PQ-310496062-2026	PRE-QUALIFICATION OF COVERALLS FOR 3 YEARS AND CALL OUT/ RATE RUNNING CONTRACT FOR ONE YEAR	16.02.2026 1130 Hrs
5.	OGDCL-SCM- FD-CB-RM-309572244-2026	WIRELESS H2S AND LEL GAS DETECTION SYSTEMS	24.03.2026 1100 Hrs

2. All bids will be opened 30 minutes after the bids closing date/ time.
3. Tender Notice/ detailed instructions are available on PPRA website at www.ppra.org.pk.
4. Tender documents are available online and bids are also required to be submitted online through e-procurement portal at https://ogdcl.com/sap-ariba-tenders or discovery.ariba.com/profile/AN01562899621 for details see "Instruction for Bidders Section" of the tender documents.
5. OGDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all the bids as per Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Rule33.

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